

THE THIRD ORDER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS

European Province

MINUTES OF A PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

held at

Bishop Woodford House, Barton Road, Ely, Cambs. CB7 4DX

15th – 16th June, 2013

Present:

Trustees:

Averil Swanton (Minister Provincial) **(AS)**

Howard McFadyen (Provincial Secretary) **(HM)**

John Reynolds (Provincial Treasurer) **(JR)**

Jackie Alexander (Link Tertiary, Central and Eastern England) **(JA)**

Hazel Sharp (Link Tertiary, South West England) **(HS)**

David Norwood (Link Tertiary, Wales, Severn, West Midlands and Marches) **(DN)**

Jan Davies (Link Tertiary, Yorkshire and East Midlands) **(JD)**

Carol Robertson (Link Tertiary, Scotland and Ireland) **(CR)**

John Wiltshire (Link Tertiary, London and South East England) **(JW)**

Martin Gillham (Link Tertiary, North East and North West) **(MG)**

Philippa Bird (Provincial Novice Guardian) **(PhB)**

Paul Bodenham (Provincial Formation Guardian) **(PaB)**

Chris Petrie (Provincial Communications Co-ordinator) **(CP)**

Non-Trustees present:

Sister Joyce, CSF

Robert Dimmick (representing Roger Healey, Link Tertiary for Central Southern England and the Channel Islands) **(RD)**

Jennifer Robinson (Minutes Secretary) **(JRob)**

AS welcomed those present, particularly Sr. Joyce, CSF and Robert Dimmick (Area Minister of Berkshire) who was representing Central Southern England in place of Roger Healey.

1. Preliminary Matters

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Roger Healey (on pilgrimage in Assisi) and Christer Sall (due to a recent family bereavement)

1.2 Two amendments were made to the Minutes of the meeting held in March 2013:

The first was on page 2: the action to be taken 2.0 of Matters arising from the Minutes should be LTs (not JA). The second on page 8 under Item 3.2 Post Chapter note: the website address should be <http://life4mation.wordpress.com/>. After these alterations were made it was unanimously agreed that the minutes were correct and they were duly signed by AS.

1.3 Matters arising from the Minutes

LTs are asked to notify the Bishop Protector of any Tertiaries who are ordained to the permanent diaconate. **Action now complete.**

PhB will notify LTs of any European contacts.

TANG is being revised.

CP reported that the Order now has an electronic version of "Walking in the Footsteps of St. Francis".

LTs were asked to keep reminding Areas of the necessity for keeping accurate records, particularly of the progression from aspirant to profession. **Action LTs.**

CP also asked that he be kept informed of any planned Cluster Days. **Action LTs.**

AS emphasised the importance and urgency of the need to find a new Treasurer Secretary of the Central Fund, which is linked to IPTOC. PhB said she had received a list of suitable candidates from Anne Lindley and the job description for Treasurer for Francis Aid had been circulated to them. PhB would let AS have this list.

Further to the discussion at the last meeting about encouraging young people to consider joining the Order, LTs were invited to tell young enquirers to contact John Wiltshire and a notice about this will appear in TON. **Action LTs.**

1.4 Correspondence

Paul Alexander had written very enthusiastically (to JW) about the film he is making. Chapter noted that a grant application will be made to the legacy fund in June 2013.

David Caldwell-Evans' paper about a Franciscan depiction of the Nativity had been referred to Hugh Beach.

The PT reported that Olga Maitland-Bell had left a bequest of £100 to the Order.

Amongst matters raised by LTs at the last meeting was that of members in Finland. JW has produced a map of Finland showing where members and potential members are living. PhB has encouraged West London Tertiaries to join with her in supporting the Finnish Tertiaries.

CS wrote about a young novice in Sweden, requesting continued membership of the TO, as a member of Nordic Catholic Church. Chapter agreed that it was not necessary to consult the Bishop Protector about this case, as this church is in communion with the Church of England.

Action.....AS will write to CS.

2. Key items from Link Tertiaries

2.3 Obituaries for TSSF members (request from Blackmore Vale). See Agenda item 3.4.

3. KEY ITEMS from Minister Provincial and Office holders:

3.1 AS mentioned the reluctance of Tertiaries to take on office within the Order and felt that this important matter must be pursued.

AS said she had been approached about access to information on the TSSF data base within the Order. After discussion it was agreed that, if the Membership Secretary receives a request from a Tertiary for information to enable him/her to contact a Tertiary in another Area or Cluster, then she, the Membership Secretary, would herself contact the second Tertiary to ascertain that he/she was willing to be contacted by the person who had enquired. HM referred to the relevant legislation about release of data base information: the need to review the terms of our licence was also raised; its whereabouts need to be established.

AS felt that the status quo should be maintained, and JR urged caution in making alterations.

3.2 PaB. Provincial Formation Guardian's Report. This section is included within Agenda item 5, because PaB's report also covers the discussion topic of Lifelong Formation.

3.3 PhB reported that the updating of TANG was in progress and that the finished document should be available in the autumn, under a new title – probably to be "Guidance for Novice Guardians". **Action.....PhB.**

3.4 CP was anxious about how to proceed following the resignations of Elizabeth Dixon and Mike Farley, as both had been members of the Communications Team. It was agreed that both vacancies should be advertised in TON, and should also appear on the website. **Action.....CP.**

It was also agreed that both Elizabeth and Mike should be sent a letter of thanks from Chapter, paying tribute to their long service to the Order. Chapter also remembered them in prayer at the Eucharist. **Action.....HM.**

Chapter agreed that the Intercessions Leaflet should in future be produced in A5 size, using a 12pt font and two columns only. This takes 12 sides of A4, rather than the current 4 sides but the cost of extra postage (if necessary) would be borne. **Action.....CP.**

The enquirers' leaflet will soon have to be reprinted; 1,000 are left in stock. CP pointed out that the current leaflet bears PhB's name and 'phone number as the point of contact, but there is also room for Areas to add their own contact's address and 'phone number. The leaflet has been a great success. Chapter members agreed that 10,000 should be printed to save money in the long run. Any comments on the content of the current leaflet should be given to CP as soon as possible. **Action.....All Chapter.**

There was discussion about the stage at which Manuals should be given to those seeking to join the Order. At the present time they are given to postulants, and PhB pointed out that this is important because the Manual provides a great deal of information which an aspirant should have before being noviced. It is, however, important to ensure that the Manuals given to postulants are up-to-date. Other members of Chapter felt that the Manuals should not be given before novicing, because it was not certain that the postulant would continue on the road to profession. It was suggested that Areas should have a stock of Manuals (each being furnished with a list of contents) which can be issued on loan to aspirants. AMs and ANGs must be sure that their copies of the Manual are up-to-date. It was agreed that a master copy must also appear on the website, in a form which can be printed off, if required. **Action CP. LTs to inform AMs & ANGs**

The matter of when Manuals should be given was then put to the vote. **Chapter agreed** by 9 votes in favour to 4 against, with one abstention, that Manuals should be given at novicing.

A complaint had been received from the Blackmore Vale Area about the decision not to publish obituaries in "Little Portion" or in TON, because of the amount of space they might take up. It was agreed that CP should ask the Editor of "Little Portion" to allow obituaries of one paragraph to appear under the relevant Cluster section. CP agreed to take the matter to the Editor, and HS would inform Blackmore Vale Area of Chapter's amended decision. **Action CP & HS.**

So as to avoid the cost of postage, AS asked if someone from the Oxford Area would be able to take a quantity of cards to the Gloucester Cluster Day. Both she and the Bishop Protector would be there and they would both be able to sign a stock of cards. JA suggested that the cost of using a courier for this purpose should be investigated and it was agreed that this should be done.

Action..... JA.

3.5 HM reported that the election for a replacement for DN as LT for Wales, Severn, West Midlands and the Marches had resulted in a dead heat. However, no votes had been received from the Avon Vale Area, as voting papers had either not been sent out or else had been sent out too late. After discussion on the best way to proceed, **Chapter agreed unanimously** that the closing date for the receipt of ballot papers should be extended until the end of July.

Action...HM. DN had generously offered to remain in post to give a degree of LT cover, and to handover to his successor prior to the October Chapter meeting. This was gratefully accepted, but it was also agreed that Chapter would pray his farewell at the June Chapter.

4. Treasurer's Report

JR tabled an interim report on the state of the Order's finances. AS re-emphasised her plea for all reports to be submitted at least two weeks before Chapter meetings. JR explained that he was

working in a difficult situation, having a new computer programme to contend with. PaB pointed out that the average Tertiary does not see the accounts of the Order and felt that Chapter owed it to Tertiaries to be as transparent in this as in other matters. JR agreed that he could send out a précis of the accounts to Areas. This would be done through the Area Treasurers, who would be asked to share the information with all members. **Action.....JR.**

To enable the move of the Order's bank account to the Co-op bank, new Standing Order Forms have been sent to Area Treasurers, again with a request for them to be distributed to all Tertiaries. A notice about the change will also appear in TON. **Action.....CP & JR.**

The annual TSSF accounts are to be submitted to the independent examiner by 1st August. It is not a requirement that any remaining balances in Area funds should be sent to Franciscan Aid.

5.0 Main Chapter Discussion Items

5.1 Governance Working Group Report and Issues

- a. Bishop Protector's Role: it was agreed that the words "he feels" should be inserted into the final sentence of No.8 of the Appendix 1; referring to this role, so that it reads "we ask that our Bishop Protector uses his Episcopal experience and wisdom to discern the character of the development of the Order and to advise the Provincial Chapter as and when he feels called to do so."

AS reported that at the recent joint meeting of SSF and CSF Chapters they were asked to think about who should be the next Bishop Protector: the decision will probably have to be made within the next two years.

- b. HM had circulated a paper on the assessment of intermediate responses received from the Areas on the present electoral process. Whilst there is no strong case for any change in the status quo, many said that there is a need for more information on the candidates. In his Appraisal of the Provincial Electoral System, HM had made the suggestion that there should be a short statement of endorsement of the candidate by the proposer/seconded and that there should be promotion of the Provincial Office holder roles on the website of in TON around the time of elections. He proposed that nominated candidates for a post should include a statement as to how they would discharge the duties of the post as part of their electoral address. He also felt that local groups should be given advance notice of the election procedure and could be encouraged to discuss what attributes they thought would be required of a candidate.

It was agreed that the matter should be discussed again at the October Chapter meeting, that the forthcoming election for an LT to replace MG could be used as a trial run, and that LTs could also mention the matter in their post-Chapter reports. **Action.....HM & LTs.**

- c. MG spoke to the paper setting out the GWG's Bullet points of questions to be addressed by Chapter, many of which had already been discussed. Chapter members agreed that both Franciscan Aid and the Provincial Engagements Group should be deleted from paragraph 2) b of that paper. It was also agreed that the discernment process should be simplified and JW would discuss the detail of this with HM. **Action..... HM & JW.**

With regard to the possibility of having another General Chapter, AS and MG thought that this might be required by the Statutes. PaB agreed to do some research on the matter and bring it back to the October meeting. **Action..... PaB.**

It was felt that, with the guidance that will be provided by the new Chapter Handbook, and the existing statutory provisions to set up a 'working group' to deal with a particular special issue, the Standing Committee was now effectively redundant.

The onward communication of decisions requires clarity in deciding what is sent to whom and how far it is the responsibility of Areas to sort this out.

In the matter of conflict within the Order, it was proposed that it might be useful to identify if there are any Tertiaries within the Province who have experience of mediation.

With regard to the induction of new members of Chapter, it was agreed that it would be useful practice for a new member to have a mentor or “buddy” to advise and support them. JW is to continue drafting the section in the Handbook on Safeguarding. **ActionJW.** The draft Handbook will be put on the website and there will be an extended period of consultation until the end of January 2014, GWG will then produce a final draft for the October 2014 meeting of Chapter. AS thanked the GWG for all the hard work they had put in on this.

3.2 Report from Provincial Formation Guardian

PaB asked LTs to ensure that reports from the Areas are all-inclusive. The LTs, after the October meetings, should ask AMs to provide their annual report on the spiritual health of the Area, plus any other key issues, so that LTs are able to submit their reports to Chapter at the subsequent March meeting. **ActionLTs.**

There was a discussion on the naming of the group of Tertiaries who were formerly the Solitaries’ Network, which is now called “Contemplatives”. JD said that the change had caused considerable upset. She felt that the position of solitaries within the network of contemplatives needs to be made clearer. PaB referred to the existing guidance on Solitaries in the Area Team Handbook and TSSF Manual, which is still valid. **Chapter accepted** PFG’s report on Solitaries, and Contemplatives and the Single Consecrated Life, but agreed that JD and PaB should do more work to establish the needs of tertiaries still called to a more solitary life. **Action..... PaB & JD.**

PaB spoke about the need for training of Area officers, but Chapter did not feel that it was feasible for all officers to attend a training event once a year. It would be preferable if it could be done in Clusters about once every three years. Cost effectiveness and practicality must be a consideration.

PaB reported that there had been a successful meeting of AFGs, but acknowledged it had been costly. **Chapter agreed** that Formation and novice training should encourage Tertiaries to be open to the possibility of serving in a variety of offices in the Order, including Chapter, and to spread awareness of the organisational structure and responsibilities. Wording to this effect could be included in the TANG update. **Action..... PhB.**

PaB asked that the matter of Leave of Absence should be further discussed at the October meeting of Chapter.

With regard to the possibility of holding a General Chapter, or some form of it, the issue of cost was identified as a major factor which threatened the exclusion of some. AS agreed to circulate the costing figures produced by Michael Daws, even though they were not current. **Action AS.**

PaB undertook to consider the issue further with the Formation Team. **Action PaB.**

Chapter members agreed that matters concerning the Christian Ecology Link should be within the province of JPIC. PaB will talk to Caroline Ugbo and hand all the paperwork over to her. **Action PaB.**

PaB suggested that the Formation work needed the support of an Administrator, but Chapter was not in favour of this. If more support is needed in this area, then the name “Administrator” should not be used (because of bad previous experience) and it would be preferable to find a volunteer to undertake the work for a given period of time and then hand it on to another volunteer, etc.

5.2 Lifelong Formation Issues

a. The TSSF Blog is ‘up and running’ and so far contributions have been received from one Area and three local groups. These have been responses to articles in “Little Portion”, and the time for submitting these must be limited. Chapter will be kept informed.

- b. The subject of networking and communications had already been aired (within the evening extended discussion period).
- c. Chapter members agreed that the variety in worship which had been experienced thus far had been much appreciated. Although members would also value a period of meditation at some point, it was agreed that the chapel was not the best place for this and suggestions for a different venue should be made to HS. JA agreed to lead a meditation at the October meeting of Chapter.

ActionJA & HS.

It was reported that both the Area Minister for Guildford (David Balding) and the Area Minister for Scotland (Tim Daplyn) - had to resign from their office in mid-term for health reasons.

Post Meeting Note: Chapter learned, with great sadness, of David Balding's death, on 22nd June.

6. Elections to Profession

The following were elected to profession, with prayer, following recommendation from their Areas:

Ms. Aulikki Kalliolahti	London West (Finland)
Revd. Mrs. Katri Kuusikallio	London West (Finland)
Mr. Visa Kuusikallio	London West (Finland)
Mrs. Liisa Laatinen	London West (Finland)
Revd. Matti Kristola	London West (Finland)
Thomas Vellacott	London West
Chris Ballard	London East & South Essex
Ellie Meadows	London East & South Essex
David Redfield	London East & South Essex
Sheila Bell	Kent West
Christian St. Ives	Sussex
Christine Ducat	Wessex
Martin Reed	Severn
Richenda Milton-Daws	Severn
Steven Baggs	Wyevever
Peter Grimwood	Wyevever
Paul Cawthorne	Shrewsbury
Cathy Cocks	West Midlands
Mark Bishop	West Midlands
Sylvia Dudbridge	West Midlands
James Treasure	West Midlands
Pauline Hart	East Anglia
Jill Hunting	East Anglia
Philip Young	East Anglia
Lynette Ankrom	Chiltern
Peter Clement	North & East Yorks
Janet Ross	Newcastle
Peter Allcock	Mersey Valley (retrospective)

It was also agreed that Wayne Edgington should embark on the process of readmission to the Order, following the procedure laid down in the Area Team Handbook.

7. Release from Vows - Minute for Chapter only

8. Leave of Absence

AS said that Chapter needed to draw up a statement regarding the terms and conditions for granting leave of absence. This would include the appointment of a Tertiary to maintain contact

and with and provide support for the person concerned, on a pastoral level. The statement needs to be issued in the name of Chapter by an individual's Area. Thus it would be up to the Area to apply to Chapter for leave of absence on behalf of the individual and, if the request was granted by Chapter, then the Area would issue the statement to that person.

Chapter agreed that two Tertiaries [names in Minutes for Chapter only] should be granted leave of absence. AS agreed to write a letter to both Areas. **Action.....AS.**

9. JPIC

A successful weekend had been held at Alnmouth in April and it is planned to hold another one. More recently, there had also been participation in the IF campaign in Hyde Park.

15. Additional Matters from Provincial Secretary

HM explained that the Chapter discernment process will hence forward be done in a simplified way. (see Agenda 5.1c.) He himself was the next officer in line for the process and this would be carried out by AS. For AS, Chapter agreed that the process would be initiated by HM, and reported to the Bishop Protector. The discernment process should be carried out six months ahead of the three-year point in the term of office. HM will issue revised instructions, with a 'discernment programme grid.' **Action.....HM.**

16. Minister Provincial's Summary

AS said that Franciscans International are in need of our prayers.

A new Treasurer is needed for Franciscan Aid from July, as PhB is resigning: the person appointed to this post will also be a Trustee.

17. Bullet Points for TON

- TSSF Intercessions Lists will in future be issued on A5 sheets in 2 columns, in 12 pt font.
- Elizabeth Dixon (Provincial Disability Adviser) and Mike Farley (TSSF Webmaster) are standing down. Chapter offered formal and sincere thanks for their long and invaluable service.
- A draft Chapter Handbook (with some sections still being developed) will go on the TSSF Website shortly. The future schedule is that a revised version, taking account of comments received by end of August, will be presented by the Working Group to the October Chapter. For those still wishing to comment after the October Chapter, you may do so until the end of January 2014. Chapter will subsequently make final decisions and Implement its use
- An end-of-year finance report for TSSF provisional accounts will be issued to Area Treasurers and Teams in October. Tertiaries who wish to do so may apply locally for copies.
- The need for a suitable volunteer to take on the TSSF Central Fund Treasurer/Secretary role is now critical. Potential candidates should contact the Provincial Secretary.
- The Area Formation Guardians had a very positive meeting and a programme of initiatives has been developed for Chapter consideration. The series of articles for discussion in "Little Portion" will continue.
- Area Formation Guardians and Ministers will report on the spiritual health of their Areas and other key issues at Francistide, to inform Link Tertiaries for March Chapter discussion.

18.0 Feedback on the Chapter Meeting.

18.1 Observations from Sr. Joyce, CSF

Sister Joyce spoke of the many changes in the Third Order which had taken place in recent years: she felt that the new processes and structures were evolving well and were being received and implemented in a positive way. She counselled that the Statutes should always be borne in mind to ensure new documents are coherent with them. Her only note of caution concerned the Chapter's discussions during the meeting, when discussions regarding change of practice were concluded too quickly.

JD asked for more time before a vote is taken after debate, and it was agreed that there should be a five-minute break in proceedings before a vote.

Sr Joyce suggested issues and their decisions could be summarised, so that they were not lost.

AS reminded Chapter members that reports to Chapter should be brief and concise, and referred to the draft Chapter handbook guidance which called for no more than two pages.

AS asked Chapter members to submit any comments on the new format of the Chapter Agenda to her by e-mail.

19. Dates for Future Chapter Meetings

The Chapters detailed below are all planned to take place at Bishop Woodford House, Ely.

2013

11th – 13th October Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representation.

2014

13th – 14th March MP and Link Tertiaries' meeting

14th – 15th March Full Chapter

13th – 14th June Full Chapter

17th – 19th October Full Chapter with SSF, CSF, and OSC representation.

2015

19th – 20th February MP and Link Tertiaries' meeting

20th – 21st February Full Chapter

12th – 13th June Full Chapter

16th – 18th October Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representation.